State of Tennessee Department of Children's Services

Administrative Policies and Procedures: 1.3

Subject:	**Communication, Information Sharing and Work Site Meetings**

Supersedes: DCS 1.3, 04/01/97

Local Policy: No
Local Procedures: No
Training Required: No
Applicable Practice Model Standard(s):

Approved by:

Effective date:	**04/01/97**
Revised date:	**06/01/05**

Application

To All Department of Children's Services Employees

Authority: TCA 37-5-106; 37-5-112

Policy

DCS Administrators and Managers shall promote an environment that encourages open communications, information sharing and team building among all employees and shall establish a formal, centralized system for facilitating communication within DCS and ensure that employees at all levels have timely access to information related to the mission, guiding principles, professional practice standards, policies and goals of the department. Employees shall participate in staff meetings as frequently as required for effective performance of their respective duties.

Procedures

A. Work site meetings for regions, field and DCS facilities

1. **Schedule**

    Monthly work site meetings will be held at each region/ field location and DCS facilities. The YDC Superintendent, Regional Administrator and DCS Group Home Supervisor must establish a time for monthly work site meetings for all managers and key employees.

2. Agenda

A written notice and agenda should be sent to the participants prior to a scheduled meeting. Employees desiring specific topics to be discussed must submit suggestions prior to the meetings to designated staff at each work site to plan the agenda.

3. Participation

DCS Managers and Supervisors must ensure and encourage line-staff participation in the decision-making process through input at work site meetings. Adequate time must be allowed for discussion of agenda items. A free exchange of ideas and opinions must be encouraged. Management must share departmental information at work site meetings.

B. Central office meetings

The Commissioner shall schedule meetings as often as necessary to review departmental goals, explore problem areas and to facilitate communication, information sharing and team building.

C. Technical assistance, policy review, interpretation and training

1. Central office staff shall provide regional, field and facility staff with timely responses to requests for technical assistance and provide immediate answers to questions about policy interpretations and practice ambiguities.

2. When new or revised policies are issued, a review, interpretation and/or training must occur during monthly work site meetings or at other specified times. The Regional Administrator, YDC Superintendent, DCS Group Home Supervisor or designees must document the review, interpretation and/or training of policies on form *CS-0479, Verification of Policy Understanding—Multiple Employees* or *CS-0481, Verification of Policy Understanding-Individual.*

3. The appropriate Executive Director, Director or designee may provide policy interpretation and information as appropriate.

D. Preparation and

1. Meeting minutes must be prepared and distributed in a

distribution of meeting minutes   timely manner and must be available to the staff who attended the meeting. Meeting minutes must be prepared and maintained on file for three (3) years.

2. Central office meeting minutes must be distributed to the regions/field/facilities as appropriate.

3. Regional/field/facility meeting minutes must be forwarded to the appropriate Central Office Director. Regional Administrators may include field office meeting minutes with regional meeting minutes.

Forms

CS-0479   Verification of Policy Understanding (Multiple Employees)

CS-0481   Verification of Policy Understanding (Individual)

Collateral Documents

None

Standards

ACA 3-JTS-1A-20

ACA 3-JTS-1A-22

ACA 3-JCRF-1A-04

DCS Practice Model Standard - 2-100A

DCS Practice Model Standard - 2-206

DCS Practice Model Standard - 8-306